

The 4 R's: A Self-Reflection Tool for Intimacy and Connection

This worksheet is designed to help you explore moments of disconnect, miscommunication, or shutdowns in your relationship—especially when it comes to connection and intimacy in all its forms: emotional, physical, sexual, or otherwise. Using the 4 R's—Rabbit, Rejecting, Regulating, and Relating—you'll begin to notice patterns, identify your needs, and create clear ways to reconnect with the people you care about.

Recognizing Your Patterns

Before we explore the 4 R's, take a moment to reflect on your typical responses to moments of closeness or disconnection.

- When do I feel most open to connection?
- When do I tend to shut down or avoid intimacy?
- Are there recurring moments (days, contexts, emotions) where misattunement happens?

Rabbit: What Are You Chasing?

In this section, identify what you're usually focused on when a partner or loved one makes a bid for connection. What are you mentally chasing or trying to complete?

Example: 'I was deep in task mode trying to finish a work report before dinner.'

- What am I usually focused on when I'm in Rabbit Mode?
- How does it feel when someone tries to connect with me during this time?
- Optional: If I imagine this from their perspective, what might they be feeling or needing?

Rejecting: What Message Is Being Sent?

Even if you're not trying to reject anyone, a misaligned moment can still feel like disconnection. This section helps you explore what the other person might perceive—and what's really happening for you.

- How might others interpret my response in these moments?
- What message do I *want* to send instead?
- Optional: What helps me acknowledge their experience while staying grounded in mine?

Regulating: What Helps You Shift Gears?

Before you can relate, you may need to regulate. Explore the tools, rituals, and signals that help you move from focus-mode into connection-mode.

- What helps me move from task mode into relational mode?
- How can I communicate when I need time to regulate?

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- Optional: What cues or language could we co-create to make this easier to talk about?

Relating: Turning Back Toward Each Other

This section is about repair and reconnection. Even if a moment of disconnection occurs, you can build habits of coming back together with compassion.

- What are simple ways I can turn back toward the other person after a missed moment?
- How do I want to show up in intimacy when I feel grounded?
- Optional: How does it feel to be received after a repair moment?



Reflection: Putting It All Together

- What did I learn about myself through this exercise?
- What conversations do I want to initiate using these insights?
- Are there any tools, signals, or rituals we could co-create to improve mutual understanding and connection?

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